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RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE 0020
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH IMMEDIATE 9634
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (NOFORN CAPTION ADDED)

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/19/2018
TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SA](#) [SU](#) [UNC](#) [UNCRIME](#)
SUBJECT: SAUDIS ON SUDAN'S BASHIR - DON'T PUSH TOO HARD

Classified By: Charge d' Affaires Michael Gfoeller for
reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (S/NF) SUMMARY. The Ambassador met on July 15 with the Saudi-American Friendship Committee at the Majlis Al-Shoura, chaired by Chief Bandar Mohamed Al-Aiban. Al-Aiban discussed his committee's recent trip to the United States as a "complete success and a turning point" in USG relations with the Majlis Al-Shoura. The members prodded the Ambassador on the recent ICC decision to indict Sudanese President Bashir on charges of genocide, claiming that we, meaning both the SAG and USG, need "room to maneuver, we can not push Bashir too far away." END SUMMARY.

The Lessons of Syria and Iran

¶2. (S/NF) The Friendship Committee, after relating on the success of their recent US trip, discussed the recent announcement of the International Criminal Court (ICC) indicting Sudanese President Umar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir on genocide charges. Some members expressed uncertainty that the USG had a role in the decision, while others were confident that the USG was indeed the instigator (note: we informed these Saudis that the USG is not a signatory to the ICC - to which they were unaware). Al-Aiban, the Committee Chair, explained that pushing the Sudanese away by indicting and arresting Bashir would make it more difficult to work together to solve any issues. Al-Aiban remarked that the SAG had been pushing the Syrian government away for decades, and as Syria is closer today to Iran than it is to its "Arab neighbors," clearly that policy "did not produce results." He also asserted that this analogy is applicable to current USG actions over Iran's nuclear ambitions - that of pushing an enemy too far away can only further antagonize the situation.

¶3. (S/NF) COMMENT. The Committee never acknowledged or commented on the validity of the charges against Bashir, or on any fact relating to the situation in Darfur. Rather, the comments expressed were procedural in nature, relating only to perceived, if erroneous, USG policy. The Committee advised that the USG should not continue down "this path," even though it seemed evident that in these Saudis' minds the USG had played a role in the ICC indictment. END COMMENT
GFOELLER